

## March Meeting

Friday, March 16  
7:30 pm

*Our Saviour's Lutheran Church  
1035 Carol Lane  
Lafayette, CA*

### V.E. Testing

*Prior to the meeting from 6-7 PM.*

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## President's QRM

by Marty Heyman, W6MDH



We finished up the Mount Diablo Winter General Class training session on Tuesday night, February 20th. We had excellent attendance


throughout and in spite of some vacation and work schedule. It was a great class. We had lots of interesting discussions. Thanks to Steve Wagner, KA6SFT, Trevor Hall, WA6JAU, and Jeremiah Blasi, K6BQ for being there to bail me out when I got stumped. We had a lot of students with years of experience so it was quite a fun group. Hopefully they went to Benicia on Saturday the 24th or Oakland on Sunday and got their upgrades.

Trevor Hall is getting ready to run an Extra Class study session starting some time in April (probably the middle of the month). I'm considering running a Technician Class study course later in the year. Let me know if you know people who'd be interested.

It certainly has been an interesting

year. Our work party to Mount Diablo got called off for February 24th. The top of the hill was closed due to snow! This trip has not been rescheduled yet.

Trevor Hall and I put on Pacificon garb that same day, grabbed Jordan the Pacificon dog, and went down to the Monterey Hamfest at Fort Ord just outside Monterey. It was a lovely day and we had no real traffic on the way down or back. Pete Harris, KE6ZIW designed a flyer that Trevor printed up and we gave out fifty of them. No tickets yet but I don't know that we would have sold any anyway. It was a nice little one-day show, well attended. They were running a free VE session and a number of club members were seen completing General Class testing. All we talked to passed. the ezam. It was the first day of testing after the Morse Code requirement was dropped and a busy day there and, hopefully, at Benecia as well. We'd love to hear if you think you're going to the DX hamvention in Visalia or to the hamvention in Reno. We'll try to set you up with flyers and or tickets to take with you to promote Pacificon.

Spring is in the air. Time to check the HT batteries and get ready to support the walks, races, and rides again! 

## Editor's Exciter

by Jeremiah R. Blasi, K6BQ

It has been a great month for me personally in regard to amateur radio. During a recent trip to Lancaster, in Southern California, I managed to add several states to my mobile log that I had not contacted before, including a great 20 meter ragchew with a station in South Carolina! In fact, it was the first QSO of the trip, and I had only been calling CQ for about 5 minutes. What a thrill to hear

Thurman, KE4OHB, come back with such a strong signal.

I also managed to fulfill a long-standing goal of building an Elecraft KX1 portable QRP CW rig. I still have a few modules to build for this radio, but have completed the main board, and it's quite a fascinating piece of equipment. I'm sure it will be a great tool for field operations while camping and hiking this summer. Perhaps in a later issue I'll give more details on this on-going project.

I have also had a great time *elmering* this month. I've been able to attend

several of the General upgrade class meetings, and was hopefully a help to someone by answering questions here and there! But I also was able to conduct a personal "ham cram" with one of my students from the school I administrate.

David has been interested in getting his ticket for about a year now, and although I have given him several study guides, he just needed the personal touch. So we took a weekend, and spent about 5-6 hours at the computer and studying the book. After the cram session was over, David took practice exams at [aa9prw.com](http://aa9prw.com)

*continued on page 2*

## Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club W6CX

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(925) 288-1730



The Carrier is a monthly publication of the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC). It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to MDARC members, and space is available. All material must be submitted to the editor by the last day of the month prior to publication. Material is accepted on a first-in, first-out basis. Articles and other material may be submitted via Internet email to [carrier@mdarc.org](mailto:carrier@mdarc.org) or delivered to the editor at the address listed in the club roster. Material will be accepted in plain ASCII or rich text format (RTF). Material may also be submitted as hardcopy.

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441.325/+ (100 PL)

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APRS: 144.39

TCP/IP: 145.71

## MDARC Club Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2007

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, CA

Marty Heyman, W6MDH, President, called the meeting to order at 7:35PM.

Paul Dickey, N6JOX was unable to attend, so Marty acted as Secretary for the meeting (hence the brevity of the minutes).

The members present approved the minutes as published in the Carrier by unanimous voice vote.

Don Anthony, N6SIA, Treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting but sent word with Trevor Hall, WA6JAU that the club has \$54,486.65 in accounts including \$3,335.87 in our checking account for immediate use.

Trevor Hall also reported that all was working well on the hill and that a work party was planned for the 24th of February to do some minor work to further improve the ATV equipment that is running quite well.

Pete Harris, KE6ZIW, Public Service Events Chairman presented four events and asked for volunteers. Members signed up during the break and after the meeting.

Bob Green, K6GD gave a brief report as Emergency Coordinator.

Nine people came for VE testing and all but one passed their exams. One person

passed Morse Code, General, and Extra Class elements in one session. At least one more passed the General exam after passing the code element recently. This is probably the last batch of General Class licensees to be licensed with Morse code endorsements.

Harvey Casson, AD6OG told the meeting about applying for a vehicle license plate using his ham call. He reminded us that it is not a vanity plate and there is a one-time processing fee of \$21.00. Apparently, not everyone in the DMV office knows about this program so be prepared for some confusion. Also, be prepared to remove your license plates and turn them in with the application. They issue a paper temporary sticker for your window for the six to ten weeks they claim it will take to get the new plates.

After a break, Todd Pearson, KF6GXR gave a speech about Search And Rescue and talked about his experiences and some of the interesting searches done around Contra Costa County. It was a good talk and he had spirited questions from the floor.

After our closing raffle, the meeting was adjourned.



## Editor's Exciter

continued from page 1

and passed! Now he's reviewing the material and planning to attend the V.E. session at the March meeting to take the Element 2 examination. David is 15, and we certainly need more young blood like him in the hobby. So, when you see him, be sure to say hello and encourage him as much as possible!

As more changes are made to this hobby, it is just as important as ever to have good elmers available to help the new folks. There is some pessimism, especially among some of the "old-timers," (no offense intended, as most have the right attitude about things), regarding the direction of the ARS with the so-called demise of morse code. However, if we will all step in and do our part to ensure that all have the right training and encouragement, I believe that amateur radio can become better than ever! With so many new and exciting digital modes, great opportunities in space/satellite communications, and rapidly increasing technology, there is always something fresh in which to participate. And there is always the excitement of a good old-fashioned brass-pounding session for those of us who like to live in the past.

So get out there, and be an elmer. No matter what your level of experience or expertise, we all have something that we can share with others. If every amateur will be involved in helping others at some level, we'll have a great future ahead of us.



## Profile of a Ham

In 1997, I was a teenager living in Macon, Georgia. I had a friend named Ian, who always carried a radio on his belt. I had always had an interest in radio communication, so one day I asked him about it. He told me about his interest in electronics and his hobby as an amateur radio operator with the callsign KF4AON. He explained how he always monitored the local repeater, and thereby kept contact with his dad and other friends. He also told me about autopatch capabilities, worldwide HF communications, and other fascinating aspects of the hobby. In the early days of cell phones, it was fascinating to hear about these capabilities—without paying for airtime!

I was enthralled with the idea of being an amateur radio operator, and began studying Gordon West's guide for the Technician license. In September, I went to the local club meeting and took the test. After watching the mail daily, I finally received my license as KF4UAR.

Shortly after I received my callsign, another ham friend loaned me a 2 meter mobile transceiver. I picked up a 5/8 wavelength mag-mount mobile antenna, and was in business. I enjoyed checking into nets and making new friends. After saving money for several months, I was able to purchase a Kenwood TH-G71 handheld. I joined ARES, where I was introduced to the world of public service under the direction of George, KD4QMY.

I was able to help in my first real emergency after I moved to Tennessee. A friend and I were driving through an intersection in Knoxville, when two other vehicles collided, almost head-on at about 40 mph. We were the only witnesses to the accident, and so we quickly assessed the damage. In one of the vehicles was a lady with three young children. Although the vehicle was totaled, and they were very shaken up, there were no serious injuries. I used the repeater to contact a local ham who was able to make a 911 call. Then I used the autopatch so the lady could call her husband to inform him of the accident. Although the accident was

tragic, no one was seriously injured, and I was excited to see the reliability of radio communication during a time of need.

For several years, due to the activity of college life, getting married and having our first child, and working a fulltime+ job, I did not do much with the radio beyond occasionally chatting with a friend on the repeater.

After moving to California, I wanted to become more active. In the Bay area there are a number of repeaters with consistent

### K6BQ/Portable at Lake Chabot



activity, which were a great help, but I wanted more—it was time to upgrade! I studied the code, passed the necessary exams, and upgraded to General. The HF bug had bitten. My first HF contact was to VY1YT, Martin, in Yukon Territory, Canada while mobile. There is a certain magic involved in radio propagation that I haven't gotten over. I enjoyed working stations in Asia, Europe, and South America.

One fateful night, I was tuning through 40 meters, listening for a CQ to answer. But there was no activity in the General portion of the band. As I tuned down below 7225 kHz, the band was hopping with QSOs. That did it; I wasn't content with the bandwidth I had—I wanted to be able to transmit everywhere on the ham

bands. The only solution was to pick up a copy of Gordon West's Extra class study guide. Two weeks later, I passed the Extra exam, and upgraded to my current callsign, K6BQ.

Since then, I have been actively pursuing mobile HF QSOs. I have fun with contests, but I really enjoy a good ragchew session with an operator on the other side of the world. I also regularly use the local repeaters (primarily 147.060, W6CX, and 147.045, AD6KV) to chat with friends during the commute.

In the car, I am using a Yaesu FT8900 quad band mobile with a quad-band antenna, and an FT-857 all-band mobile with 100 watts through Hustler resonators on 17, 20, and 40 meters. I also have a Tarheel screwdriver antenna, which I hope to install soon (if you've done this before, I could sure use your help!), allowing me the use of all HF bands while mobile without changing resonators!

My current home station is a Kenwood TS-530 running 100 watts through an MFJ tuner to a bent dipole in the attic. Although I have SSB capabilities, I operate almost

exclusively CW from home, with an old J-37 straight key. Currently my speed is only about 10 wpm, but with practice I hope to bump that up.

I also enjoy building kits, and have completed several, my first being a Rockmite QRP CW transceiver for 7040 kHz that works very well! Currently, I am working hard to finish my Elecraft KX1 for portable QRP operations.

I have much to learn about electronics and radio theory, but am enjoying the opportunities to communicate with what I already know. Amateur radio is a great hobby providing many hours of relaxation and opportunities to meet interesting people. Catch you on the air!

73 de K6BQ





## ARRL INVITES COMMENTS ON NEW HF DIGITAL PROTOCOL

ARRL Letter, Feb. 23, 2007

The ARRL is seeking comments from amateurs concerning development of an open-source (non-proprietary) data communications protocol suitable for use by radio amateurs over high-frequency (HF) fading paths. This is not a Request for Proposals (RFP). An RFP may or not be forthcoming depending on evaluation of the information received.

Specifically, the League is asking for comments and information on the following issues:

\* Access Method: Is Orthogonal Frequency-Division Multiplexing (OFDM) the best candidate technology, or should other competitive technologies be considered?

\* Data Rate and Bandwidth: What data

rates/throughputs are achievable at various bandwidths up to 3 kHz bandwidth?

\* Adaptivity: What adaptive features should be considered, such as automatic adjustment of transmitter power, modulation waveform and coding, in order to maximize throughput and efficiency in two-way contacts?

\* Robustness: What is achievable for reliable operation at power levels typical in the Amateur Radio Service and low signal/noise and interference ratios?

\* Error control: What are the appropriate applications of error control suitable for HF channels? For example, how should Repeat reQuest (ARQ) and Forward Error Control (FEC) be applied to two-way contacts and one-to-many (roundtable and bulletin) transmissions?


\* Activity Detection: What is an effective method of determining whether a frequency is busy prior to transmission?

\* Operating System: What operating systems (such as Windows or Linux) are

appropriate for Amateur Radio use with this protocol?

\* Hardware: What practical and affordable hardware platforms are suitable for amateur stations? Consider the use of personal computers with or without sound cards. Provide any information about the need for an additional "box" if needed.

Please provide the following with your response: (1) name of respondent, (2) respondent's contact information, (3) related experience, and (4) type of respondent: (individual, partnership, corporation or group). Do not include proprietary information as part of your response.

Post, fax or e-mail your response by 1900 UTC, May 15, 2007, to ARRL Chief Technology Officer Paul Rinaldo, W4RI <w4ri@arrl.org>, 3545 Chain Bridge Rd -- Suite 209, Fairfax, VA 22030; Fax: 703-934-2079. 

## MDARC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2007

Fudruckers, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek

The meeting was called to order by President Marty Heyman at 7:30 PM. A quorum was not present so all the following items were discussed, but no business was transacted.

There is one opening on the Board due to Don Anthony's election to Treasurer.

16 new memberships were taken at the last general meeting in January.

The General Class license class has continued with 15 students. The only cost to the students has been the purchase of the book. It is expected to be completed in March.


The request from W6UHA to use the 2 meter repeater system for a Sunday net has been turned down because it involved a 6 minute broadcast which is unacceptable by the FCC.

The Technical committee will continue to meet at the environmental center.

There are 3 issues they are dealing with related to the remote stations:

- The Volmer site has not been approved by the owner as yet.
- The controller requires significant programming changes to support the plan.
- The equipment for the installation needs to be inventoried to confirm everything is there.

A work party is planned for February 24 on Mt. Diablo to make some repairs on the ATV system and to replace some fans in the repeater power supplies.

The contract for PACIFICON 2008 is waiting for a response from the Marriott Hotel to the proposal made in January. 

Dick Brown, KT6X, Acting Secretary

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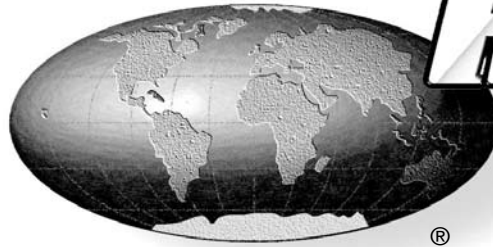
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## W6CX Nets

147.06 & 441.325 MHz (100 PL)

**Thursday 7:30 pm**

MDARC Club Net

**Thursday 8:00 pm**

General ATV Net

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## Contra Costa County ARES/RACES Nets

**Thursday, 7:00 pm**

*Central County* 145.680 Simplex  
Jim Brunk, N6BHX

*East County* 146.535 Simplex  
Drew Hanson, KD6GLY

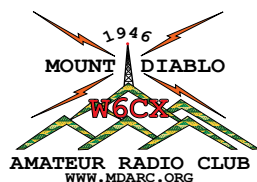
*South County* 146.355/+ (100 PL)  
Ed Ritchie, K6SFD

*West County* 145.110/-  
Steve Adams, KF6WNH

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## March Events

<i>March 5</i>	7:00 pm	<b>MDARC Board Meeting</b> <i>Fuddrucker's, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek</i>
<i>March 16</i>	7:30 pm	<b>MDARC Monthly Meeting</b> <i>Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Lafayette</i>
<i>March 28</i>		<b>March Carrier Deadline</b>



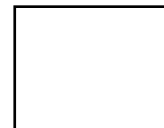
## The Carrier

*Newsletter of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club*

P.O. Box 23222

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[www.mdarc.org](http://www.mdarc.org)



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***Next meeting: March 16***